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EDITORIAL

CERTAIN words concerned with what has come to be called 'Spiritual Theology' have lost any real or persistent meaning. This difficulty of terminology may be general today, but it would seem to be most acutely felt in the realms of the theology of Christian life with which this review is concerned. Before using the words 'mystic' or 'contemplation' or even 'prayer', one needs to define precisely what one means by the words. Even so, after the first paragraph, the reader is likely to revert to his own particular use of the word and so risks great misunderstanding. The trained clergy are no more prepared to accept these words in a uniform sense than the average Christian. To preach to the clergy on 'contemplation' often produces an immediate reaction of rejection. The active parish priest feels that he is being told to lay on one side work that it is his plain duty to perform in order to occupy long stretches of the day on his knees. Or the young curate recognises a special section of the spiritual exercises on the contemplation of certain aspects of our Lord's life, a section which he feels no longer applies to himself. To speak of 'mystical graces' in a sermon conjures up weird images in the minds of the listeners; they see ecstasies carried lightly like leaves to the church's rafters or rather gruesome wounds in hands and feet oozing with blood. 'The mysteries', if they are educated, speak to them of Grecian women in flowing white robes gathered round waist and breast by golden thongs, of small braziers and little square altars; if they are the average congregation they may think generally of a vague mass of details concerning God which they know to be mysterious and practically unintelligible.

It is one of the purposes of a review like *THE LIFE* to form a consistent and intelligible terminology that will help people to deepen their perception of God's activity in their lives. But to be successful it would need to be written by all the experts of the day who would have agreed beforehand to the use of the terms; it would need to be ten times larger than its present size; and it would need to be read by several million subscribers every month.

Such an ambition being quite hopeless, it still remains possible to play a small part in putting forward the true teaching of the Church regarding Christian life with a consistent and uniform vocabulary.

For this reason, for example, two articles appear in the present issue on aspects of Mother Julian of Norwich. She was an 'English mystic'; and under that label she has often been relegated to the sphere of interesting and strange phenomena. As a true 'mystic' however she is a member of the society of her own day, not an interesting exception. She lived, prayed and dictated her 'Revelations' at a time when Europe was peopled with men and women like her, the spiritual leaders who were trying to rescue the Christian life of their day from its decadence and apathy. Or perhaps it would be truer to say that the Holy Spirit at that time was using a group of people scattered over Europe to recall the generality to the fullness of life in union with Christ. Mother Julian was thus being used in England as St Catherine was being used in Italy. She was a true member of her own generation. As a true 'mystic' she was also manifesting realities that were based on sound theology; the common teaching of the Church was manifested directly and concretely in her life and experience of Christ living in her. The true mystic does not profess a life or doctrine that differs from that of the true Church, so that he or she will be found ultimately to be in conformity with the Church's great teachers such as St Thomas Aquinas. The two articles, therefore, should serve to secure a truer conception of 'mysticism' as well as making their own points.

The justification for using the word 'mystical' in such phrases as 'the mystical body' is that the word stands primarily for a full union with God in Christ, a union that does not inevitably beget strange and embarrassing experiences on behaviour. That other great English mystical work *The Cloud of Unknowing* has plenty to say about those who think that strange behaviour is part of the mystic's privilege, the rolling of the eyes and the ecstatic posture. But the Church as the body of Christ on earth only tolerates these tricks. She is 'mystical' because she is herself the mystery, Christ on earth, in the fullness of his grace.

ST CATHERINE OF SIENA AND DAME JULIAN OF NORWICH¹

PROFESSOR ARRIGO LEVASTI

IT is always attractive to make a comparison between mystics differing in their nature and formation; and a study of their experience, fundamentally the same, in its different interpretations, helps us to discover lights and shades, tones and accents, individual peculiarities that may escape our notice when we consider one mystic alone. This is so in the case of Catherine of Siena. Set by the side of other women mystics her world becomes more distinct, and her own figure takes on clearer outline. Compared with St Gertrude, for instance, she is more ecclesiastically-minded; compared with St Hildegarde, more positive; with St Teresa, more subtle; while perhaps she outstrips them all in enthusiasm and eloquence.

Of very different temperament was her contemporary the English mystical writer, Julian of Norwich, whose subject matter was somewhat similar to Catherine's. Catherine wrote her 'Dialogue' in the autumn of 1378: Julian received her 'Revelations' in March 1373, and may have written them out at once, revising and perhaps amplifying them in 1393, that is, thirteen years after Catherine's death. It is an interesting question whether Julian had come across her writings, or at least her letters. There is no proof of this, although some critics believe that she had. Only when the connections between England and Catherine's first disciples, the Caterinati, have been carefully studied shall we be able to answer this question. Meanwhile we have to consider the resemblances as purely fortuitous or, better, as resulting from the same faith, the same mystical experiences. Without analysing in detail the teaching of the two great Religious I shall indicate a few examples of their different approach.

Julian is a purely contemplative spirit. Rapt in profound concentration she experiences visions over which she reflects

¹ Translated from *Solenni Feste Nazionali a Gloria di Santa Caterina da Siena* (1940) by Dorothy M. White.

and from which she derives philosophical and mystical considerations. Catherine, instead, is more active than contemplative. She feels a constant need of souls to save, and so she is always urging men to cast themselves into that great faith which is her life, and which is true salvation.

Let us take a subject that both women mystics often deal with: the Precious Blood. For Julian, the blood has a cosmic or world-embracing significance, for Catherine it has a purifying and therefore moral function. Julian says: 'The precious plenty of his dear-worthy Blood descended into Hell and burst her bands, and delivered all that were there that belonged to the court of Heaven. The precious plenty of his dear-worthy blood overfloweth all earth, and is ready to wash all creatures of sin, which be of good-will, have been and shall be. The precious plenty of his dear-worthy Blood ascended into Heaven to the blessed body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and there is in him, bleeding and praying for us to the Father—and is, and shall be as long as it needeth. And evermore it floweth in all Heavens, enjoying the salvation of all mankind, that are there, and shall be—fulfilling the number that faileth.'

Catherine is far from this clear calm vision. Her soul, in continual ferment, cries out in its enthusiasm: 'The Blood inebriates and fortifies; it gives the warmth and light of Truth to the soul.' This men must discover for themselves through their own profound experience, and she implores them to do so, crying out impulsively in an almost terrifying crescendo: 'Drown yourselves in the blood of Christ crucified: bathe in his Blood: slake your thirst in his Blood: inebriate yourselves in his Blood: array yourselves in his Blood: mourn and rejoice in his Blood: grow strong in the Blood: lose your weakness and blindness in the Blood of the spotless Lamb'.

Catherine needs to appeal to the individual, for she is always an apostle: her own experience only acquires value in her eyes in so far as it enables others to share in the love of Christ. Julian, instead, speaks a more universal language, and contemplates her own intimate vision that loses itself in the operation of the Eternal Love.

The conception of love shows a similar diversity of charac-

ter. It is positive, clear, strong, steady in Catherine, general or universal in Julian. For the Sienese girl love gives life to all the virtues, and 'only love can bring forth love', 'love is never idle, but always undertakes great things'. Julian says: 'Wouldst thou learn thy Lord's meaning in this thing? Love was his meaning. Who showed it thee? Love. What showed he thee? Love. Wherefore showed it he? For Love. Hold thee therein and thou shalt learn and know more in the same. But thou shalt never know nor learn therein other thing without end.'

If we turn to a particular aspect of love, that is, maternal love, we see that both these mystics felt its spiritual grandeur: but while Catherine felt herself to be the mother of friends and foes alike, enfolding all in her embrace, Julian contemplated motherhood in all its sublimity, so lofty that only Christ himself could be the perfect mother. 'The mother's service is nearest, readiest, and surest: nearest for it is most of nature, readiest for it is most of love, and surest for it is most of truth. This office none might, nor could, nor ever should do to the full, but he alone. We know that all our mothers' bearing is bearing of us to pain and dying; but our very Mother, Jesus, he All-Love, beareth us to joy and to endless living.'

It would take too long to pursue the study of how the two mystics dealt with the same subjects and the same religious experiences. One might quote their differing treatment of fear, of consideration of time, of the devil, of Hell, of the soul sheltering in the pierced side of Christ, and all the aspects of God: Life, Love, Light, and so on, but in all these comparisons the same peculiarities would be evident. Julian meditates, and draws conclusions of universal application: Catherine's apostolic zeal transforms into action her profoundest experiences and those most rich in divine love. Her eager throbbing heart does not allow her to generalise too much: she has always before her eyes a world that is crashing in ruin, and she is out to snatch from the ruins more and more souls to plunge them into the wisdom and power of God.

ST THOMAS AQUINAS AND MOTHER JULIAN ON CHARITY

D. E. MARSHALL

IF we consider the ideas of St Thomas and Dame Julian on divine charity we find that there are similarities and differences. As might be expected, St Thomas is more analytical; however, Dame Julian has some ideas the sources of which may perhaps be found in her contemporary European mystics. Whereas St Thomas works out his ideas from his theology and on a developed plan, Dame Julian's thoughts are the result of her visions and come in the order of their occurrence.

St Thomas writes: 'God's love as a divine gift is eternal and immutable, yet as regards the effect it imprints upon us it may at times be interrupted in so far as we at times fall away from him and again return to him. Now the effect of the divine love in us—which is taken away by sin—is grace whereby a man becomes worthy of eternal life; from this, however, sin shuts him out.' (I-II, 113.)

In Dame Julian's *Revelations of Divine Love* we have: 'Our Lord anent himself may not forgive, for he may not be wroth: it were impossible. For this was shewed: . . . we are endlessly oned to him in love, it is the most impossible that may be, that God should be wroth. For wrath and friendship be two contraries.' And later: 'For I saw that God began never to love mankind: for right the same that mankind shall be in endless bliss, fulfilling the joy of God as anent his works, right so the same mankind hath been in the foresight of God, known and loved from without beginning in his rightful intent. . . . For ere that he made us he loved us, and when we were made we loved him.'

When pondering on divine charity St Thomas begins in the *Secunda Secundae* with the nature of charity and, basing his conclusions on the words of Christ quoted in the fifteenth chapter of St John's Gospel, he decides that charity is a kind of friendship between God and man, and that man is called unto the fellowship of the Son of God. God communicates to man a share in his own divine life, in his happiness, and

man is made able to respond, he is lifted up to a higher level of living, a supernatural level. 'The divine Essence itself is charity, even as it is wisdom and goodness' (Q. 23).

The English mystic stresses God's wooing of the human soul. She describes a more intimate life shared by God and man than is actually stated in the *Summa*. 'It is the most wisdom for a creature to do after the will and counsel of his highest sovereign Friend. This blessed friend is Jesus, and it is his will and his counsel that we hold us with him, and fasten us to him homely—evermore . . .'. Also: 'My darling, I am glad thou art come to me; in all thy woe I have ever been with thee; and now seest thou my loving and we be oned in bliss'. How strongly akin to the words quoted by Lucie Christine in her *Spiritual Journal*, and in which we see the changelessness of God down the centuries: 'Are we not *two* in thy difficulties and perplexities? . . . Thou art precious to me. . . . Thou desirest me; I desire thee.' (p. 184.)

We are shown in the *Summa* that divine charity springs from the Holy Ghost himself dwelling in the soul; man has to have some extra power added to his natural ones if he is to attain to the love of God. 'The divine Essence itself is charity, even as it is wisdom, and goodness. Wherefore just as we are said to be good with the goodness which is God (since the goodness whereby we are formally good is a participation of divine goodness) . . . , so, too, the charity whereby formally we love our neighbour is a participation of divine charity.' Again: 'Charity works formally . . . because it produces an infinite effect, since, by justifying the soul, it unites it to God, this proves the infinity of the divine power, which is the author of charity'. (23, a 2.) Summing up, we have: 'Charity is something created in the soul': it is the Holy Ghost himself working in the soul (23, a 2). Fr Reginald Buckler in the *Perfection of Man by Charity* writes about this: 'The Divine Spirit, therefore, as the Increated Charity, lives and works within the soul, by means of his own created charity; making thus the virtue of charity the bond of our union with God, and the proximate principle of our spiritual life, action, and merit.

'This divine principle, from being at first as a germ within

us, energises, strengthens, and expands, by the nourishment and exercise it receives in prayer, mortification, and the works of life, until its virtue passes to the powers of the soul, and even the senses and members of the body, leavening them all with its divine influence, governing their movements, and ordering and regulating their operations; thus bringing to our nature its full measure of accidental perfection.'

Turning to the teaching in the *Revelations of Divine Love*, we discover that the gracious work of the Holy Ghost in the soul is mentioned several times. We read of the 'sweet, gracious, inward light of the Holy Ghost'; and 'we graciously accord to him (i.e., Christ) through the gifts and virtues of the Holy Ghost'. She describes how the Holy Ghost moves the soul: 'But our good Lord the Holy Ghost, which is endless life dwelling in our soul full securely, keepeth us, and worketh therein a peace and bringeth it to ease by grace, and accordeth it to God, and maketh it buxom.' Later on occurs: 'The Holy Ghost graciously inspireth into us gifts leading to endless life'.

Charmingly she reminds us that 'Of which great things he willeth that we have knowing here as it were in an ABC, that is to say, that we have a little knowing; whereof we shall have fullness in heaven'.

In considering the subject of charity St Thomas discusses if charity can be lost, and if so, is it lost by one mortal sin; can it be perfect in this life; the degrees of this virtue, whether it increases, and allied matters. He returns to the principle of charity 'being the infusion of the Holy Ghost, who is the love of the Father and the Son, and the participation of whom in us is created charity'.

He concludes that for perfect charity man must love as much as he can; in this life he must make an earnest endeavour to give his time to God and divine things, and that a man must give his whole heart to God continually. In teaching about venial sins he states that these are a hindrance to the life of charity although they do not destroy it. 'God does not turn away from man, more than man turns away from him.'

Dame Julian is in accord with the Angelic Doctor on these points. She, too, is much concerned with sin and she agrees

that a man's time and energies should be dedicated to God.

In common with many great Christian thinkers she conceives sin to be no deed of the 'Godly will that never assented to sin, nor never shall'. Is she referring to venial sins from which no one in this life is entirely free? Or is she weighing St Paul's idea of the two laws working in man but against the human will? (See Epistle to the Romans). Or has she something else in mind? It is difficult to know with certainty.

Of how to deal with personal sin she writes: 'And if we . . . any time fall, yet we readily rise, knowing the sweet touching of grace, . . . and go we forthwith to God in love; and neither, on the one side, fall over low, inclining to despair, nor, on the other side, be over reckless, as if we made no matter of it, but nakedly acknowledging our feebleness, [we] wit that we may not stand a twinkling of an eye but by keeping of grace, and reverently cleave to God, on him only trusting.' Towards the end of her book she returns to the subject: 'Sin is in sooth viler and painfuller than hell . . .; for it is contrary to our fair kind. For as soothly as sin is unclean, so soothly is it unkind, and thus an horrible thing to see.' She sees how sin is deadly for a short time in the blessed creature of endless life. Original in her thought is the idea that 'what time we fall into sin and leave the mind of him and the keeping of our own soul, then keepeth Christ alone all the charge; and thus standeth he sorrowfully and moaning'.

'Then belongeth it to us for reverence and kindness to turn us hastily to our Lord and leave him not alone . . . and what time I am strange to him by sin, despair or sloth, then I let my Lord stand alone, in as much as it is in me'. (235.)

Concerning the sins of others she tells us: 'For he (Christ) willeth that we be like him in wholeness of endless love to ourself and to our even-Christians; but [that we] nakedly hate the sin and endlessly love the soul, as God loveth it. Then shall we hate sin as God hateth it. . . .' Further: 'The beholding of other men's sins maketh as it were a thick mist afore the eyes of the soul, and we may not, for the time, see the fairness of God, unless we may behold them with contrition with him. . . .'

How in harmony this is with the thought in the *Summa*, namely, that because sin does not destroy nature, we should love sinners out of charity. We have to hate the sinner's guilt and to love his capacity, which is exactly the same as our own, for happiness, the image of God in his soul: this is perfect hatred. It is shown also that the public good is to be preferred to that of the individual: this clarifies the justice of condemning criminals, who are a menace to the common good, to punishment.

The love of the neighbour is treated minutely in six articles in the *Summa*. Basing his doctrine on St John's words, 'This is the divine command that has been given to us; the man who loves God must be one who loves his brother as well'. St Thomas makes his chief point that love of God and of our neighbour are one and the same love, not two separate loves. 'The charity whereby formally we love our neighbour is a participation of divine charity' (23, a 2). And: 'The aspect under which our neighbour is to be loved is God, since what we ought to love in our neighbour is that he may be in God. Hence it is specifically the same act whereby we love God, and whereby we love our neighbour. . . .' The analogy of seeing light and colour under the aspect of the light is used to make this clear. It is stressed that love of God is more meritorious. It is on the basis of a fellowship in happiness that our love for others rests. We have to see, judge, and love as God sees, judges, and loves; nothing less is sufficient for the Christian life.

Although Dame Julian does not analyse our relationship with others and their respective claims upon us, she is much concerned with love for others. She asserts: 'God loveth all that he hath made; and he that loveth generally all his even-Christians for God, he loveth all that is. . . . For in man is God, and God is in all.' And later: 'I saw that each kind compassion that man hath on his even-Christians, it is Christ in him'. Also: 'For he willeth that we be like him in wholeness of endless love to ourself and to our even-Christians, no more than his love be broken to us for our sin, no more willeth he that our love be broken to ourself and to our even-Christians. . . ?'. She is full of the idea that we have to love others with God and as he does.

In desire for God and the deliberate choice of him, his true lovers are of one mind. Her theme is: 'Thee needeth nought but him'. She mentions 'The blissful sight' which shall be the 'end of all manner of pain to the loving soul, and the fulfilling of all manner of joy and bliss. And that shewed he in the high marvellous words: I it am that is highest; I it am that is lowest; I it am that is all.' Again: 'The more the soul seeth of God, the more it desireth him by his grace'.

St Thomas makes clear that the source of all happiness is God. For 'At the sight of God the mind cannot but delight'; and: 'By loving God a man glows to gaze on his beauty'. He realises that even by nature man loves God more than himself, and tends towards God. 'God will be to each the entire reason for his love, for God is man's entire good'. Furthermore: 'The gift of charity is bestowed by God on each one, namely, that he may first of all direct his mind to God'. Implicitly St Thomas deals with desire for and the choice of God, but without becoming personal or passionate.

The fruits of charity, namely, joy, peace, rest, and mercy are treated by each writer in accordance with individual outlook and temperament and the purpose in view: nevertheless some of these ideas are remarkably similar. Dame Julian has moving thoughts about peace. 'Thus saw I that God is our very peace, and he is our sure Keeper when we are ourselves in unpeace, and he continually worketh to bring us into endless peace . . . suddenly is the soul oned to God when it is truly peaced in itself. . . .' From St Thomas we learn that concord is a part of peace; that the chief movement of the soul finds rest in God and that real peace can be only about good things; that it is the union of the appetites and inclinations; finally that it is a beatitude and a fruit. 'We are commanded to keep peace because it is an act of charity; and for this reason too it is a meritorious act. Hence it is placed among the beatitudes. . . . It is also numbered among the fruits, in so far as it is a final good having spiritual sweetness.' (29, a. 4.)

The use of the reason, sloth, and wisdom, might, and goodness of God are dealt with by each writer.

The lyrical, passionate writing of Julian, which is so different from the impersonal, remote style of St Thomas, can enchant the reader. One of her most attractive and helpful ideas, which is repeated some four times in her *Revelations*, is: 'We be his bliss, we be his meed, we be his worship, we be his crown—and this was a singular marvel and a full delectable beholding that we be his crown.' (58; also 61, 77-8, 147.) Fr Vincent McNabb in *God's Way of Mercy* suggests a kindred idea: 'We are of great value to him, even if of little value to ourselves' (p. 104).

It may be remembered that when, at the end of St Thomas's life, Christ from the crucifix asked him what reward he would have for his writing about himself, St Thomas answered: 'None other than thyself, Lord'. Dame Julian, too, pleaded for God only as her entire good. And we have the exquisite words of Christ to the anchoress: 'I love thee, and thou lovest me, and our love shall not be desparted in two, and for thy profit I suffer [these things to come]'. (f. 56, Slo. 2499. p. 238, Orchard edition.)

Margery Kempe of Lynn tells us of the words of Christ to her: 'Doughter yf thou knewe how swete thy loue is to me, thou woldest neuer do other thyne but loue me with all thy herte. . . .' (E.E.T.S. ed.) In these words we find an echo of both St Thomas and Dame Julian. And also in the words of Christ recorded by Lucie Christine in her *Journal*: 'I am all things to Thee. Never seek anything outside Me'. (p. 216.)

Both these lovers of God were united in wilfully choosing him, to be lovers 'lastingly without end', realising clearly that God was their good and their all.

NOTE: The translators of Paul Claudel's letter to Gabriel Frizeau which was published in the November, 1952, *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*, were Mlle A. Chalufour and E. Pullen.

FREEDOM AND THE ACTIVE LIFE

JEROME TONER, O.P.

ST THOMAS puts very briefly the difference between a free-man and a slave, when he says: 'a free-man is one who is the cause of what is his, but a slave owes everything he has to another'. (*De Reg. Prin.* I, 1.) Thus in a sense we are all the slaves of God. Our Lord brought friendship into that relation; yet for all that, we did not cease to be God's servants. Terms like 'military service', 'civil service' and 'foreign service' are apt to create the impression that 'divine service' is likewise limited to a particular kind of work, such as going to church on Sundays. It is easy to miss the real meaning of what Christ said—'You cannot serve two masters', or of what St Paul said—'All whatsoever you do in word or in work do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him'. (Col. 3.)

That we should remain the friends of God and at the same time his servants is not unexplainable. God has surely made us his friends. We are far more than mere *pen friends*, since besides messages, he has sent his Son as well. God is so much nearer to us since then, and we are nearer to him. By faith and charity we live in his presence; and hope reminds us always of his absence. We hope, with his help, to attain to a closer friendship. Eventually we shall see him in his own house, and shall enjoy the social life of the three divine Persons. Of course, this promise of a greater intimacy is something more than we deserved or expected. It is a prize, and even more than a prize, because we could never be worthy of it, unless God made us worthy. That is why St Paul speaks of God's qualifying us 'to share in the inheritance of the saints in light'. (Col. 1.)

We are indeed the friends of God—'I have called you friends because everything that I heard from my Father, I have made known to you' (John 15). We are too intimate with God to be just his servants. Nevertheless the fact remains that he has set joy before us as *prize*. Eternal happiness must be thought of as something we have to work for.

'Brought under servitude to God, you have for your fruit the increase of sanctification; and the result, eternal life' (Rom. 7, 22).

No matter where its doctrinal source may be divined, it is not the least of modern problems that people think that they are not committed in any way to this divine servitude. Yet for St Paul it takes in 'all whatsoever you do'. How frequently one meets even young married men with growing families who fail to find in their work a way of serving God? Perhaps that is the fault of some preachers who stress too much the need of 'offering up' one's work as penance for sin. Undoubtedly work has its thorny side; but there is more to it than that. Work has normally a relation to the family, and a father who works is really serving God, if only he tries to embody God's design into the family life. He is making acts of virtues that are named and unnamed, and are peculiar to the head of the family society. Interesting or uninteresting, his work is more than a penance. It is certainly a divine service, and in a way, it is even a gift. For we cannot forget that we are all the time friends of God; it is the love of him that urges us to serve. That service is accomplished in more things than bending the knee. Work in the broad garden of God's Providence is a service of love; it is the gift of *oneself*.

Though we are God's servants, we are never swamped by him. There is nothing 'totalitarian' about God's interest in humanity. Every movement of the soul towards God is free in the liberty of divine grace. Otherwise we could not consider the joy set before us as a prize to be won or lost, and our sufferings and actions would lack the essential quality of being meritorious, were we merely God's slaves and not also his friends. Though it is true that God himself has put us into the state of being able to merit eternal happiness, he does not at the same time withdraw the power, and indeed, the necessity of making steps of our own in that direction. How God and we work together is a mystery. Examples from our ordinary life tend to cheapen the mystery and it could easily become a shabby and heretical misrepresentation. His way of working with us is incomprehensible. But one thing is certain—if we are capable at all of

human acts, we ourselves must make a movement Godwards. That movement must be our own. No property is more precious than a man's dominion over his own actions. That dominion is priceless when it claims as 'ours' all actions that lead one to God.

A movement of the soul which will merit eternal happiness must be a movement of love. No wonder St John could speak of Christianity in terms of nothing else but love! Still, I suppose, there is something to be said for dividing Christianity into the two lives, 'the Active' and 'the Contemplative'. The danger lies where people measure Christian progress towards eternal joy by other movements and not by movements of love. Nevertheless, we still have this great division into the active and the contemplative life. For all the illogical conclusions it can lead some people to deduce, it does force on one the idea that an active life can be a real expression of love for God. However much it distracts one from thinking of him, it need never undo the friendship between us. Our Lord made that point clear when he rewarded the just man for being good to his neighbour—'as long as you did it to one of these least, you did it to me'.

What a pity that the active life is considered so much in terms of nursing sisters, lay-catholic actionists and so on! This idea is altogether too narrow. Most people live and die in the active life; so did their parents before them. Their activity was golden, because it was done out of love for God. They loved God and gave themselves up to his service within the broad mansions of his earthly household. If there are so many mansions in Heaven, there must be as many here. The door of every house could be an entrance to a mansion where people live on earth as friends of God and dedicated to his service.

Now this is the fundamental christian objection to state domination: it cuts one off from a full active life. Aristotle distinguished three lives—'the Contemplative, the Active, and the Voluptuous'. Now one of the dangers is that if ordinary people are left without a full active life with all the opportunities for the exercise of virtue it affords them, then they may quite easily degenerate. All the tendencies of fallen nature will incline them towards the voluptuous

or pleasure existence. Left with one talent, they may bury it, as St Ambrose says, 'in the mire of carnal pleasure'. At any rate, their lives will tend to be more and more sensuous.

St Thomas reminds us that if one chooses to live the active life, one needs much of this world's goods. For in this active life, a person has to show forth his love for God in an exterior way—in corporal works, not only of mercy, but also of justice, social and personal, of liberality, magnificence and other virtues. But if the state takes away one's property, great or small, if it burdens itself with the responsibilities which really belong to parents in the home, if it leaves no insecurity to the mercy of ordinary people, then in what manner are millions of people to exercise those virtues which must manifest their love for God? It might be argued that they have still the virtue of legal justice! 'Are they not free to obey the new laws and regulations? Is there not a wide field for the active life in simply obeying the dictates of bureaucrats?' But it is hard to make virtue of necessity. Having become a slave in the servile state it is hard to hold on theoretically to one's liberty and make of each necessary fulfilment of civic duty a free choice.

This point of view is worth considering. Too often, catholic sociologists bemoan the loss of personal freedom and human dignity without being precise about what is meant by such words. God has made us free—not only as men—but also with 'the liberty of divine grace'. Each of us is a cause of what is his. And in so far as we put forth human actions under the impulse of divine grace, we are causing for ourselves an eternal beatitude. We are freely meriting it. And the more one is capable of doing quite freely and within the garden of God's Providence, the greater is one's opportunity of exercising the moral virtues, and so much the greater is one's merit. Happiness from the christian point of view is a prize. We must not deliberately choose a way of life, which for all the advantages it may have in bringing about a certain type of worldly happiness, would withdraw from us many possible ways of meriting what is eternal.

THE NUPTIAL MASS

DOMINIC J. SIRE, O.P.

TRADITION has always surrounded marriage with ceremony and feasting even among the most primitive races and countries. Being the climax of human love it is not surprising to find this very natural instinct expressing itself thus. This tradition has almost inevitably found its way into the christian mode of life and the liturgical spirit of the Church.

Mere love of pageantry is not a sufficient explanation of the full ceremonial of christian marriage. The Nuptial Mass, which should always form part of any full christian marriage, has a much deeper significance and reason, especially for the parties concerned. It is not just a kind of luxury, something added to fill out and prolong the festivities, still less should it ever be the privilege of the rich. It is more than an adornment or a frill, for it is deeply concerned with the very essence of marriage. The Church never acts from mere whim but always with a very definite set purpose, and she has seen fit to bestow the nuptial blessing at the very heart of the Mass. The reason for this is surely that charity which is 'the bond of union' is the central idea of both the Mass and marriage.

Natural and supernatural love are here blended into one. The natural is in fact totally supernaturalised in the sacrament and the sacrifice, and thereby acquires an altogether deeper meaning. The priest stands for the dispenser of God's sacraments and it is his office to minister. To administer a sacrament is therefore to participate in a very true sense in the eternal priesthood of Christ. In the sacrament of matrimony the ministers are the persons contracting the marriage, they administer the sacrament to one another and thus share in this priesthood. Moreover, the Mass is the sacrifice of infinite love, and matrimony the sacrament of human love. That the two should be closely associated in the full ceremonial of marriage is therefore not surprising. But the secret of this close association would seem to be the intimate connection between love and sacri-

fice. Wherever love is to be found there must there also be sacrifice.

With the promise of lifelong fidelity that bride and bridegroom make begins the life story of fresh sacrifice. To make a new home entails inevitably the abandonment of the old. It is no mere negative turning away from the old home that fed them and brought them up but the embracing of a new life and a new home. So it is fitting that as their very first act of fidelity implies sacrifice so their first joint act should be to offer *The Sacrifice*, to unite themselves with the sacrifice of Christ which must henceforth be the inspiration and model of their new life together. In their mutual administration of the sacrament of matrimony they took upon themselves, as it were, the character of priests, so also together they enter the sanctuary for the first and last time to be united as closely as possible with the priest in the sacrifice of the Mass. This solemn moment is unique for the bride for it will be the only time in her life that she will be allowed to attend Mass in the sanctuary. At the moment of the *Pater Noster*, the christian prayer, the Church bestows on her the solemn blessing of a bride, praying that God will make her union fruitful and calling upon God to grant her all those virtues so fitting and necessary to her new life as a wife. To be a mother will bring further sacrifices of time and convenience, of effort and suffering if she is to carry out properly and to the full her maternal duties. Only a mother can know a mother's love.

Again the notes of love and sacrifice sound in harmony. Small wonder that the Church has coupled the infinite love of Christ on Calvary with the supreme love of motherhood. But Mary stands on Calvary as more than the perfect mother; she stands as the supreme example of faithfulness, a thing forgotten in marriage today. The words of the marriage promise 'for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health' could not be more perfectly exemplified for she stood there at the foot of the cross till death did part her from her divine Son. It was on Calvary that Christ committed his mother to the care of Saint John, and it is in the Nuptial Mass that the Church further commits the bride to the care of her husband, a care which

must be no less tender and affectionate than the care Saint John lavished on Mary. It was on Calvary that Christ assumed the full responsibility for the sins of the whole human race, and paid with the last drop of his precious Blood the price of those sins. As by his sacrifice he set the example of responsibility to the world, so in this same sacrifice the newly wed must assume their responsibilities as he did without reserve. Calvary is the example of obedience unto death, and this is the lesson which the Church wishes to teach husband and wife by making Calvary a part of their wedding feast.

These are surely some of the reasons for which the Church has made the Mass a part of the marriage ceremony. It is no chance ornament to the ceremony, no mere pageantry, but a very deliberate and purposeful action on her part. Love must give if it is true love, and love must therefore sacrifice. The whole sacramental system of the Church is built up on symbolism, and the symbolism surely is clear enough. The Epistle and Gospel sum up so perfectly the teaching of the Church on marriage. The Epistle proclaims in unmistakable terms the duties of marriage, and the Gospel underlines in equally unmistakable words the permanence of the contract. No marriage really seems complete without this homily on married life, and therefore no true christian marriage is really complete unless it includes the Mass which expresses so clearly the mind of the Church which is the living teaching voice of God. *Deus qui incepit ipse perficiat*. Marriage united to Calvary is begun by God and he will see to its perfect accomplishment.

STRUCTURE OF RELIGIOUS CHASTITY (II)

OSWIN MAGRATH

VIRGINITY AND PERFECT CONTINENCE

Christian chastity and purity, therefore, look towards God, and by a development in this direction can become a new virtue, that of vowed virginity or perfect and perpetual continence. Virginity consists in the will to abstain totally from sex for God, the will to be immune from sexual pleasure. It is destroyed by deliberate consent to such pleasure, though restored by penitence, in the sense that there can return a will to remain virgin and to have remained virgin, though the fact of indulgence cannot be done away with. Bodily integrity is not essential. Perfect perpetual continence is the same will to abstain from all use of sex, but only in the future, in those who take the vow after voluntary experience of sex. While those who take the vow before any such experience can reiterate their former good will even after losing the virtue, and so regain its formal element in the will, though not the material element of never having experienced sex, those who vow after such experience cannot will virginity, except as a might-have-been.

The purpose of both virginity and perfect perpetual continence is the same. In the first place it is ascetical: to free from the bondage of concupiscence and the life of the instincts and the avoidance of occasions of sin and imperfection; secondly it aims at undividedness, in so far as it renounces marriage's inevitable dividedness between God and the human partner, and avoids the establishment of a bond with the world; thirdly its aim is contemplative, to make life with and for God direct.

Since these virtues consist, in their negative aspect, in a renunciation of marriage, and since it is a teaching of faith that religious virginity or continence is better than marriage, light will be thrown on the positive nature of these virtues by considering the goods of marriage and the way in which they surpass it. Marriage is a normal means of perfection. It frees from pride and self-sufficiency by surrender to an-

other human being; from love of worldly goods by causing their renunciation for the good of spouse and family; from the love of bodily pleasure by controlling it and demanding self-denial from love of another. It frees love of our neighbour, and so prepares the way for freeing love of God. The vow of chastity must, if it is truly better than marriage, include all these good things in a higher degree. Hence it is not mere continence through temperament, dislike, laziness, pride or independence; nor yet for the sake of an occupation with which marriage is incompatible; nor even continence accepted as the will of God for an individual. The vow of chastity is positive surrender to God and a marriage with God. Such surrender can be far more total than that made to another human being, and so far more perfecting and liberating from self; for the surrender of marriage, while liberating, involves also an alienation of the body and of much personal liberty to the partner, and so limits and narrows; whereas surrender to God perfects and widens everything. Again the renunciation of worldly goods and bodily pleasures can be more total, for marriage involves the use of both, while religious chastity can renounce sex pleasure utterly and worldly goods much more completely. And the positive gift made to God by love is limitless; whereas that made to the marriage-partner must necessarily have many limits. The vow of chastity is, therefore, more perfect than marriage precisely because it contains in a more perfect form all the good things of marriage. It is a greater means of perfection, since it obliges to the practice of acts of greater perfection.

The religious must therefore beware of seeking compensation again in the things renounced: a void is created by the renunciation of earthly love which must be filled with divine love. Otherwise it will be filled with lesser things: if not with lust, at least with pride, ambition, love of worldly goods, affection for human beings, intellectual pride or work treated as an end.

THE GIFT OF FEAR

The virtues which directly control sexual pleasure are perfected and strengthened by the effects of the gift of fear. This gift of the Holy Ghost in itself looks towards the

greatness and majesty of God, his awesomeness and power to punish evil. The spirit of man in consequence draws back into its own nothingness in an act of reverence or fear. In the face of the divine Majesty all created glory and pleasures seem as nothing, as things which draw away from the supreme good and risk God's fatherly anger. Poverty of spirit, counting the goods of the world as nothing beside God, and the beatitude of mourning, withdrawing from the pleasures given by creatures, are the result. Hence the gift of fear is the motive force behind perfect chastity. Reverence for the divine Majesty leads to the abandonment of the greatest pleasures of this life and the joys of marriage, as being nothing in the presence of infinite goodness, as tending to separate from God, if not by sin, at least in a lesser degree by a certain dividedness, which ill accords with the sense of the divine greatness and its absolute demands. The very activity of the gift of fear, in the presence of the majesty of God, causes the appetite for pleasure to contract and weaken, since fear and reverence are contrary to pleasure, and so produces temperance and chastity. So that the gift immeasurably strengthens the choice of perpetual chastity, giving it a divine motive under the action of the Holy Spirit, and calming the urge to pleasure by reverence for the presence of God in the temple of the body.

RELIGION

Virginity (or perfect perpetual continence) is only constituted a distinct virtue from ordinary chastity if it is combined with the virtue of religion by a vow. The renunciation of so great and good a means of perfection as marriage is only a good and virtuous thing in itself, if it is made because the very fact of so doing is the securing of a greater good. This good is the gift of the person to God, in which all the good things of marriage are attained in a more perfect form. By total renunciation of sex for God the person is given to him; the person is the 'matter' of the vow. Only by marriage can one human person give himself totally to another; by the renunciation of marriage for God the person is given even more totally to him. So that the vow of chastity is a true spiritual marriage with God, and like the

sacrament is an image of the marriage between Christ and the partner, and not only in the person of another baptised human being. By the vow the virtue of chastity is altered in itself and becomes another virtue: it is no longer merely control of sex in relation to the person's life-purpose (such as is even the case where sex is renounced for a work in life which is manifestly God's will); but it is total renunciation of the voluntary use of sex, a renunciation that can only be made to and for God and by a vow.

The vow of chastity also has a public aspect, no longer as a donation of the individual, but as a consecration by the Church. The religious state as a whole is such a consecration; but the vow of chastity is specially so since it constitutes a visible setting aside of the person for God in a way which the other vows do not, owing to the nature of the good renounced. The setting aside of a religious by the Church is a sacramental of a permanent kind, a consecration or setting aside for God. It confers a certain spiritual reality in virtue of the Church's act, and a special capacity to receive the graces required for such a state. The religious is set aside by the Church as a sign of all the absolute rights and claims of God over his creatures; as a member of a body segregated in order to perform worship and intercession for the whole Church and to perform works of mercy on behalf of the whole body; and as a visible embodiment of the sanctity of the Church.

This consecration is made visible by the public religious profession, and especially by the vow of chastity which is the most incompatible with a life in the world. The donation of the individual and the consecration by the Church which solemnises it admits today of different degrees of permanence and totality: the ancient consecration of virgins is almost disused, but there is the solemn vow, which gives the very right to use sex and invalidates marriage attempted, and the simple vow which renounces only the use of sex, and makes marriages illicit. But in both cases there is the total renunciation of all use of sex and marriage. The public vow of chastity is strictly speaking a vow of perfect and perpetual continence. Continence means not the virtue chastity as such, but merely *de facto* control of passion so

that it does not overcome the will, without that full domination of the sensitive appetites which virtue implies. The vow is, therefore, a promise to perform in perpetuity acts of continence, and these of their nature tend to develop the true virtue of chastity in life-long practice. It is a promise to tend to perfect chastity by definite means, namely those which a religious life in continence necessarily enforce.

CHARITY

Since the purpose of the vow of chastity is to set the person free to love God perfectly, charity is, so to say, its obverse. Before the Fall, and probably in a state of pure nature, marriage would have been the normal and most direct way to God, and perpetual continence not virtuous nor leading to virtue. But now, when the life of grace and its possibilities is combined with fallen nature and its weaknesses, there is no doubt that to renounce marriage in order to live wholly for God is a more perfect state. It means not a lesser but a greater love. It is not the state of the old bachelor or old maid, whose heart easily grows hard and torpid, and love dull and deadened, while self-love dominates: on the contrary it must lead to fuller love of God and of man.

The renunciation of marriage frees from the narrow circle of the family, and makes it possible to love all God's children, giving the freedom of the whole family to God. It includes far greater labours, sacrifices and devotedness than marriage. Just as the dilemma of our Lady's vow of virginity and motherhood was solved by her being given a child who was God, so is the religious given God's children, to serve whom does not distract from God but brings closer to him. The love that exists in marriage and family life is thus incomparably widened and perfected; this love should keep the heart warm and open, and exclude pre-occupation with self, depression, seeking after pleasure and comfort, petty affection and favouritism.

This love finds its first and chief field in the religious community, where charity and all the domestic virtues can be practised with a greater perfection and more thorough unselfishness than in marriage. The practice of the social

forms of charity within the community is the normal and natural means by which charity grows to perfection. This family life is the exchange, a hundredfold better, which is received for the family life renounced, and the Church does not normally allow her consecrated members to live outside community life. Only the person already perfect is able to lead a perfect life of charity with God alone as a hermit. Normally the wise safeguards of enclosure, prayer, penance and community life are necessary to preclude reversal to a lower ideal. Only in the case of religious sent to the Missions does the Church make an easy and habitual exception, and this is because the benefit of community life, which consist primarily in the compulsion there is to practise charity, is supplied in a still higher degree in missionary life, and replaces the normal safeguards and means of perfection.

The centre of the life of vowed chastity is, therefore, charity, love of God and the neighbour for God, and love of the neighbour as a means to love of God, so that its outwardly negative characteristics are submerged in its positive value of love, donation and consecration.



A LAY CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

A REPORT GIVEN AT THE SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE

THE aim of this community is described in the provisional Rule as 'A school of the Lord's service composed of men, women and children, engaged in farm and craft work, having all things in common and holding to the counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience, that in all things God may be glorified'. The membership at the present time is twelve adults and eleven children, made up of four families and four single men and women.

The community was started in 1940 as a political experiment by a small group of young people holding pacifist and socialist convictions. They felt that society was disintegrating from within and that the way back to a more creative life was through a different economic structure and the discovery of a new pattern of human relatedness. Possessions were

pooled and income shared; anyone who wished could join; there was no form of authority or discipline beyond the natural one of earning sufficient to live on by working on the small community farm.

After a few years, with considerable changes in membership and the usual difficulties of human relationships, it became obvious that the primary assumption of the political materialist doctrine that man was entirely conditioned by circumstance had been proved false. The tendency to disintegration seemed to lie within each person whatever the external context might be. This realisation left a vacuum in which nothing from the past had any life and belief of any kind was impossible. The response to this was to throw out whatever remnants of a hollow culture remained and to attempt the return to a primitive instinctual basis—and to let the unknown happen.

Eventually, the necessity for a radical process of change in the natural person before community living was possible led to contact with Jungian psychology—which opened the way to the writings of the Hindu and Chinese mystics and in time to the Christian mystics. Some members visited a Catholic monastery, periods of meditation were started in the community life, and one by one, over a period of three years, the members were all received into the Church. The Divine Office grew up out of the set periods for meditation and a provisional Rule, based on the Rule of St Benedict, was drawn up and accepted by all the full members.

The community has in this way grown to a position of comparative stability—but the form is still in the process of emerging and the following description is of a life which is likely to change in details during the next few years. The daily work consists of farming (mainly dairying), a small pottery, painting, woodcarving (just beginning), building and housework. There is a large farmhouse containing three flats, rooms for single people, a communal kitchen and dining room, a cottage, the farm buildings and workshops, and the community chapel and uncompleted library. The families live and eat in their flats except for the midday meal which is in common—this is prepared by one of the women on weekly rota, the other women doing the house-

work and washing.

The Divine Office is said in English: Lauds and Prime at 6 a.m.; Terce, 9 a.m.; Sext just before dinner at 12.30 p.m.; None, 4 p.m.; Vespers, 6.30 p.m.; and Compline, 9.30 p.m. The rhythm of the Office and the work throughout the day has been one of the most important ways in which the life has begun to grow together into one piece.

There are four categories of membership—associate, postulant, novice and full; full members undertake: (i) to become oblates of St Benedict, (ii) to obey the Rule and decisions of the community, (iii) to make a gift of all their possessions to the community, and (iv) to promise stability in the community life. The senior oblate's responsibility is to see that the Rule is kept and to bring to the notice of the community any problems which should be discussed and solved. The planning of the life is carried out by a council of three members who meet every week, but no decision of this body (or of the senior oblate) is operative until it has been discussed and passed by the weekly general meeting of all the full members. Each section of the work has its manager, and the aim is to decentralise responsibility as much as possible.

At the present time, Mass is celebrated in the community chapel on Sundays and Thursdays, but it is hoped that daily Mass will become possible in the future.

All this, of course, is only a very sketchy outline of outward appearances; the more important problems remain untouched. Some discussion of these problems would help the community to find its bearings in the Church into which it has just been born.

THE FAMILY

Concern is sometimes felt by Catholic visitors that the community impinges too much on the integrity of family life. The experience of the community so far has been that families have grown together rather than the opposite—but the starting point has been outside the Church, and as no Catholic family has yet joined fully this evidence is not conclusive. What does seem clear is that the Christian family should be closely knit to other Christian families in the Church—that the parish should be a community in which

the members are interdependent in every aspect of their life.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

The community is in the peculiar position of having come into the Church without private property and with the conviction that common ownership (voluntarily and in a small group only) has a very great spiritual value in removing barriers between people and forcing a man to stand naked to his fellow man. On the other hand, the Church has stressed on many occasions the necessity for private property. The two may not contradict each other as much as this suggests, however, because the teaching of the Church is directed against forcible large-scale collectivisation and large-scale capitalism, both of which deprive the worker of independence and any sense of stewardship over material goods. The community life is directed towards developing this stewardship and responsibility for material goods, but a member is not, of course, free to do what he likes with these goods. Is this latter a necessary part of the teaching of the Church in this matter?

PRAYER

It seems possible that by means of the Office and the community life generally that growth in prayer could be a natural one, rather than an isolated, self-conscious struggling up a ladder of stages and categories. It is much more difficult to retain illusions about oneself living and working with others than when alone. There is no escape from the persons, the situations, or the moods which are difficult, and these are the means sent by God for transforming our self-will; whereas an individual living today in a large city finds it only too easy to avoid the difficult person, to change the unpleasant situation and by-pass the mood.

UNITY

The tremendous importance of unity grows more apparent with each problem the community has to face. Even if a theoretically wrong decision is made, this is of no importance providing the members remain united in charity. God will set it right in his own time—whereas an opinion (even if right and leading to greater efficiency) insisted upon to the point of division, removes us from his

guidance and inspiration. This in no way lessens the responsibility of each member to express any opinion he may have on a subject under discussion, but the freely given acceptance of the community decision should follow as the necessary complement.

APOSTOLIC WORK

The apostolic work of the community lies in prayer and hospitality and hardly at all in discussion or exposition. The young person of today is usually pagan, whether nominally Christian or not, and words mean little to him because the symbols have been drained of life by continual lip-service. He is separated from the Church by an abyss not of his own making and only love and the grace of God can lead him over. It is not a neglecting or falling away from something once known (in this case words are often necessary), but a total ignorance of what life is about and an inability to understand what the Church is saying—a traveller lost in a strange country with no maps and little knowledge of the language. Often the only way is to chatter in a pub and make some sort of contact, at the same time praying that the Holy Spirit will lead him blindfold by the hand.

The reason why a community like this has happened seems to lie in the strange situation in which Western man is placed. He leads an atomised, split life with no roots in Nature, no roots in any localised human community, no supernatural roots. This inevitably seeps into the life of the Church and religion becomes yet another department instead of the source which binds everything together.

‘And all they that believed were together and had all things common. Their possessions and goods they sold and divided them to all, according as every one had need.’



POINT OF VIEW

ON THE MOTHERHOOD OF GOD

At this time, in the Church, there seems to be a divine urge leading men and women to study more deeply the truth concerning both God and themselves.

In a recent conference, given at a retreat by Archbishop

Roberts, s.j., he told the retreatants that when they said the 'Our Father', they should think of God as both Father and Mother, and address him so, as the Indians do their benefactors, for they always say: 'You are my father and my mother'. When the Archbishop was asked if Mary, the Blessed Virgin, represents the Motherhood of God, he answered in the affirmative.

To me it has always seemed strange that God, in all three persons, should be addressed and spoken of only in the masculine gender. It seemed to impose limits to the perfection of God, the Infinite and Universal. A man has certain qualities suitable to his manhood, but he lacks other qualities which are, or should be, found in womanhood. It is true that in both sexes there are rudimentary traits, both physical and moral, of the opposite sex, and is it not possible that the strong attraction existing between the sexes is in some measure a longing for the fulfilment of those rudimentary traits? A man feels his personality rounded off and completed in his mate, and the same may be said of the woman.

That God should stand isolated and alone, in an unique existence, contemplating his own perfections, does not seem to be altogether acceptable, nor that he should have had a Son from all eternity, to whom he gave a Mother only in time. What is the meaning of those words: 'From the womb before the day star have I begotten thee'? Does it not seem possible that in God there are two principles, for ever united, but yet distinct?

In the highest as in the lowest forms of creation—which is the mirror of God—two principles are the all but universal rule, and are essential to being. The apparently simple element of water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen; electricity can only exist by the combination of the negative and positive currents; fire is fuel and air, and cannot appear if one be absent. The smallest insect has its mate, or it remains unfruitful, and a man dies without issue who does not take a wife. May it not be that within the spiritual life of God there are two elements, since in the first chapter of Genesis we are told: 'In the image of God created he him (mankind), male and female created he them'.

If it be true that Mary represents the Motherhood of God, her dominion over her Son is not so surprising, and our faith in her intercession is certainly not misplaced. That which remained hidden from the beginning is made known to us through Mary. The Jehovah of the Jews, a God of justice and power is revealed as our tender Mother as well as our omnipotent Father; and is not the Holy Spirit the Bond of Love, uniting the Motherhood to the Fatherhood, and overflowing in the Person of the Son, through whom he is for ever poured forth upon the Church for her sanctification?

The beauty of the Spring, the loveliness of 'Nature', the innocence of young creatures, the abounding richness of life, spiritual as well as physical, and the glories of the Saints, both men and women, all speak of parenthood, the union of two divine elements producing eternally new generations of beings, which all have taken rise in the love of God, Father and Mother of every created thing.

A DISCALCED CARMELITE



GOD AND THE UNCONSCIOUS¹

DONALD NICHOLL

FR VICTOR WHITE has contributed so frequently to *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* that any attempt to avoid a slightly domestic atmosphere in this account of his work would be forced and unnatural. Not that this present collection of his essays contains more than one which has appeared here already. Some day, we hope, the others which have been published here may also be collected into a book. Such a work would be more concerned with the theological side of the frontiers of psychology and theology than is *God and the Unconscious*, where psychology is at least the starting-point—though never the terminus. Much of the material will be familiar to the readers of *Blackfriars*, *Dominican Studies*, and the Guild of Pastoral Psychology pamphlets. But there are several important new chapters; all the essays have been re-worked; and the result is a book of surprising unity. Furthermore, there is a most illuminating appendix by Fr Gebhard Frei (it 'should straighten out once and for all what has proved one of the most considerable tangles which confront the theologically-minded student of Jung, namely, his conception of the "Self"

¹ By Victor White, O.P. (Harvill Press, pp. vii-xxv, 277; 2 is.)

in its religious aspects'). And the Foreword by Dr Jung himself is also interesting, if somewhat baffling.

Since I am no more of a psychologist or a theologian than is any reasonably educated Catholic I might conveniently begin by suggesting why these essays of Fr Victor White's are proving such a great help to the reasonably educated Catholic—and especially, perhaps, to those of the younger generation. It is that he treats the Catholic faith as though it means something and is relevant to the problems we encounter daily. Secondly, that he assumes his readers to be mature human beings wanting to know the truth, not overgrown children in search of a consoling dummy—not even a Catholic dummy.

It may sound rather startling to suggest that practising Catholics fail to treat the faith as 'relevant' and 'meaning something'. But are such failures really so unusual? For instance, is it even a rare thing for a person at the ritual of baptism to wonder what puny sorts of devils are leaving the child in face of these perfunctory passes? And if we are going to acquiesce in such perfunctoriness, simply accepting evil spirits as an outmoded superstition inconveniently embedded in the ritual, need we go on pretending about the rest of the deposit of faith? Because 'not only the words and actions of Christ as related in the Gospels, but also the Epistles, and still more obviously the Apocalypse, are largely unintelligible except on the supposition of the reality of Satan and other evil spirits' (Ch. X, 'Devils and Complexes', p. 179)—this is the kind of language we are meant to use, presumably, when we are told to let our answers be 'Yea, yea', and 'Nay, nay'. And how refreshing it is to find a thinker who takes the angels sufficiently seriously to suggest that they operate 'by the excitation of the neurones of the cerebral cortex—see J. C. Eccles, F.R.S.: "Hypothesis Relating to the Brain-Mind Problem", *Nature*, Vol. 168, etc.'. The world of *Nature*, the Brain-Mind Problem, and J. C. Eccles, F.R.S., is a world where most of us feel at home; there is every reason to welcome the angels to it. Similarly the healing function of the Christian mystery is presented in this book as central—not as an embarrassing extra. All these pages, in fact, are full of the primitive *power* of Christianity, and give one a fresh and direct sense of the world-transforming *power* which is a most obvious feature of the primitive Church.

As for the maturity which Fr White demands of his readers, it is best described in the words with which he concludes the chapter on 'Freud, Jung, and God.' After outlining the challenge implicit in Jung's psychology, he writes:

'Whether we belong to any denomination or none, he (i.e. Jung) challenges us to become more conscious, more responsible, more adult in our religion—or irreligion—if we would not destroy ourselves and our fellows. Western man fools himself when he thinks he has outgrown

religion and has no need of God—as he is learning in the bitter Nemesis to his pretensions to self-sufficiency. But he *has* outgrown an infantile religiosity which is no more than an escape-mechanism, an outer and theoretic compensation for an inner godlessness in practice. When the salt has lost its savour, it is indeed good for nothing but to be trodden down by men.'

It can be seen that the study of deep-psychology, when pursued with such discrimination, vitalises Christian truths which are in danger of going dead within our souls. The paragraph just quoted leads us inevitably to the 'cultivation of an immanent Prudence' which seems to have been lost in much post-Reformation Catholic moral theology (Ch. VIII, 'Psychotherapy and Ethics, p. 158). This re-vitalising of moribund Christian truths under the stimulus of deep-psychology is again illustrated in the fact that 'psychological analysis is seldom successful unless it brings about . . . a radical change of the patient's conscious outlook, a *metanoia* or change of mind . . . a shifting of his whole centre of awareness. . . .' (Ch. IX, 'The Analyst and the Confessor', p. 171.) Is this not a fact to inspire us Christians to seek after *metanoia* ourselves? Is there any good reason for allowing 'conversion' to remain a prerogative of those who come over to Rome, as though the need for conversion were not equally urgent in Rome? This is a subject which we hope to hear more about from Fr White sometime, because it is at the very heart of both Christianity and analysis. I mean, that a person may apparently have a conversion (from Communism to Catholicism, from neurosis to 'normality', etc.) and yet that person has just the same evil effect on other people as before (though now it is the Communists rather than the Catholics, and the neurotics rather than the 'normal', who feel the effects). It is as though the person's basic mental counters have simply been shifted—but remain clustered around the same selfish centre—and so continue to produce the same effects, though in another place. Granted that this does happen, would not a more detailed study of *metanoia* (and *pseudo-metanoia*?) in his patients make it clear to the analyst that only *grace* can effect a sufficiently radical change of mind, one which transforms the patient's 'whole centre of awareness'? And it might even lead some analysts to recognise that their own change of mind was not supposed to come to an end at the moment they emerged from the process of analysis. The number of analysts who imagine that they are no longer in need of conversion once they have been analysed is very high, if we may believe the astringent remarks upon them in Theodore Reik's *Inner Experience of a Psychoanalyst*.

This is an issue which seems particularly in need of clarification at a time when deep-psychology is part of everyone's mental background; for there is certainly a danger that pre-occupation with psychology will shift

our centre of awareness away from the grace-sin axis on to the gnosis-ignorance axis. When this happens we begin to deplore our mistakes instead of confessing our sins. It is then that we become such a real menace both to ourselves and other people; for, limited creatures that we are, we can never know all the effects of our behaviour on other people or ourselves, and if we think we know then we create Hell all round. The sure way to stop creating Hell all round is to have Heaven within, and not all our creaturely wisdom can do that for us. Which is why I fervently hope that all who are interested in psychology will meditate long over Fr White's pages on Gnosticism (especially on the Knowing One . . . who sees that 'Inner World of Man' which is hidden from Tom, Dick, and Harry . . . and is in danger of becoming increasingly mastered and possessed by it). And the pages on *malum culpae* as against *malum poenae* (162-173) deserve the attention of us all.

The problem of evil seems to be the main bone of contention between Jung and Fr White; and we learn that their discussion has so far 'generated more heat than light' (p. 75, n.). This is not difficult to believe if St Thomas is correct when he tells us that you cannot profitably dispute about metaphysical principles with an opponent who refuses to take up any metaphysical position whatsoever. Jung does not acknowledge any metaphysical position (though if his refusal to equate evil and *privatio boni* is not a metaphysical position, I don't know what is!). Therefore the discussion has come to a deadlock.

However, there is a different discussion running through the book which we may hope has not come to a deadlock—that between the author and the Freudian school. Over the years there were significant, if subtle, changes in Freud's position which many of us have failed to take into account—partly influenced, I suspect, by Fr White's championship of Jung. If this inadequate account of *God and the Unconscious* does no more than stir its author to further reflections on Freud's development it will not have been fruitless.



REVIEWS

THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING and Other Treatises by a Fourteenth-Century Mystic. Revised, edited and introduced by Abbot Justin McCann, O.S.B. (Orchard Series; Burns Oates; 16s.)

A recommendation of a further edition of this great work should perhaps be prefaced with the words of the author: 'I pray thee, for God's love, that thou let none see this book unless it be such a one as thou thinkest is apt for the book. Those who do read it should read it as a whole for if a man saw one part and not another, peradventure he might

lightly be led into error.' Father Baker completes this advice with the further warning: 'observe your own way, spirit and call: and of books, take and practise according as you shall find to be proper and answerable to such way, spirit and call of yours and no further'. We are reminded of the reluctance of the primitive Church to present indiscriminately the deepest mysteries of the Faith to people still unprepared to receive them. In these days of popularised mysticism, in an age when quick and facile judgments take the place of a gradual preparation forming the right disposition for the reception of great truths, such warnings are more than ever necessary.

But given the correct disposition, much good will come from a knowledge of the teaching of this book, and it is important to realise that it is rooted in the oldest Christian traditions. Together with Father Baker's commentary and the *Epistle of Privy Counsel*, this edition includes the translation by the author of *The Cloud* of the mystical theology of Dionysius. This shows the basis of the author's teaching on prayer. The absolute transcendence of God and the impossibility of our knowledge of him giving us an insight into his very inmost nature, implies that we know him in prayer in proportion to our transcendence of distinct concepts and images. These must give way to the simple direction of the will towards God and the work of the understanding which sees only obscurely, without clear knowledge. We know him most intimately through the way of unknowing.

If this paradox should seem to be a stumbling-block, it must be recalled that this teaching is in line with the metaphysics of St Thomas, who places at the height of metaphysical knowledge the knowledge of God as unknown, quoting Dionysius: '*in finem nostrae cognitionis, Deum tamquam ignotum cognoscimus*'. When the mystics state this truth—which seems at first so bewildering—they are simply penetrating, on the deeper level of contemplative prayer, that same truth which has, on the philosophical plane, the strictest metaphysical precision.

This fourteenth-century English mystic has the support, not only of St Thomas, but of the oldest traditions of the Greek Fathers—above all, of St Gregory of Nyssa, who shows as the highest point of knowledge that obscure union with God unknown which Moses experienced when he entered the cloud. This shows us that the deepest roots of this doctrine are to be found in the Word of God revealed through the Scriptures, which are penetrated through and through with this imagery of *the Cloud* and the luminous darkness, as at the Transfiguration: '*Ecce nubes lucida obumbravit eos*'. The author of the introduction illustrates this excellently with such texts as: 'He hath made darkness his hiding place. Clouds and darkness surround him', and '*Ego dormio, sed cor meum vigilat*'.

It would be a help towards our relationship with the Oriental Christians if they could become familiar with a work like this, which shows how deeply the traditions of Eastern mystics such as St Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius have passed into our Western traditions. This profound continuity with the past is one of the most interesting characteristics of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. It should be noticed, too, that although the author is dealing principally with interior prayer and that although his work does not show that striking emphasis on the approach to God through the Incarnation that we find in Walter Hilton, he does in fact give the greatest importance to the prayer of the Church: 'They that be true workers in this work, they worship no prayer so much as those of Holy Church. And therefore they do them in the form and statute that they be ordained by holy fathers before us'. This shows that even the author of *The Cloud* who leads us into what may seem to be the most abstract and imageless form of the mystical life sets primary emphasis on the corporate prayer of the Church.

DOM ODO BROOKE, O.S.B.

THE WESTERN LITURGY AND ITS HISTORY. By Theodor Klauser. (Mowbray; 4s.)

Professor F. L. Cross has translated this short work because 'it gives a lucid and comprehensive survey of these discoveries [of the technicians] in a form wholly free from technicalities and without ever losing sight of their practical implications'. It is indeed a very readable summary of the work of a great liturgical expert. The importance of the work may be gathered from the following quotation from the introduction: 'In deep and ineffaceable characters it (the Roman Liturgy) bears the marks of the spiritual development not of a single people, but of several. The most diverse influences, assuming ever new forms, have played their part in fashioning the structure and composition of our Liturgy.' The author throws in great contrast the earlier living spirit of prayer and devotion which moulded the Roman way of worship and the later 'unhistorical attachment to legality of the rubricists'. For this alone the book should be read by all who are trying to pray the Mass.

C.P.

AVICENNA: SCIENTIST AND PHILOSOPHER. Edited by G. M. Wickens. (Luzac; 15s.)

This book is an excellent introduction to Avicenna, being a series of lectures given at Cambridge in the spring of last year to mark the millenary of the Arab philosopher's birth. Although the lectures were intended to have a general appeal, the copious notes which have been added to the printed edition enhance its value for the scholar. A general introduction to Avicenna's life and times is given by Professor Arberry's vivid and enter-

taining commentary on the philosopher's autobiography. The second essay with the title 'Avicenna's Place in Arabic Philosophy' is not the historical study one might expect portraying the philosopher against the general background of Arabic thought. Professor Teiler is concerned to show us in Avicenna the forerunner of modern philosophy and to interpret his thought in terms of Kant's antinomies and Bergson's creative evolution. There is a gap here, one feels, which however is partly filled by Professor Wickens' admirable essay, 'Some Aspects of Avicenna's Work', which gives us a good idea of his originality as a thinker and explains some of the more fundamental positions he reached both in theology and philosophy. This, together with Fr Kenelm Foster's treatment of Avicenna's influence on Western thought in the thirteenth century, and in particular on St Thomas Aquinas, is perhaps the most profound and inspiring part of the book. In showing the influence which the Arab philosopher had on Jewish thought Professor Rosenthal brings out in particular what Maimonides owes to his predecessor, thus showing from a new angle his influence on the middle ages through this Jewish thinker. There is also an essay by Professor Crombie describing Avicenna's achievement as a scientist and stressing the place he occupies in the medieval scientific tradition. A useful index of names concludes the volume.

P.M.

RELIGIOUS DANCES, IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND IN POPULAR MEDICINE. By E. Louis Backman. (Allen and Unwin; 35s.)

When Nietzsche said that 'God is dead' he was saying something most significant—not about God, but about humanity. For when human beings get themselves into a sufficiently desperate psychological mess they become almost incapable of encountering the living God; the blockage at the human level is so fixed that only the most sincere surrender can remove it. By that time the mysteries of religion have begun to seem absurd. For instance, if a human being has never loved another human person so much as to want to cherish every object that the other has touched or handled, then the cult of relics of the saints is bound to strike them as odd—even superstitious. Similarly, anyone who has never jumped for joy, or wished to dance out of sheer gladness, will fail to understand why human beings throughout the ages have danced their religion. It is true, of course, that they will also be spared the disappointment of hearing the priest announcing '*et circumdabo altare tuum, Domine*' and then doing nothing of the sort! But that is little consolation for being cut off from the time-old human tradition of dancing one's faith and hopes. It is this tradition which forms the subject of Professor Backman's extremely interesting study.

His work is a documentary, rather than an inspired, account of the place occupied by the dance in Judaism, in the early Church and through-

out the Middle Ages. And although one feels that much of it is rather superficial as compared with Hugo Rahner's *Eranos* essay, which goes to the theological roots of the dance, there are many illuminating quotations from the Fathers to gladden the hearts of those who feel moved to join in the Dance of the Angels, that notion so dear to the heart of St Ambrose. As a supplement to Rahner's essay, Backman's book, however, is most welcome. And the descriptions and analyses of the epidemics of dancing madness will attract the student of medieval society (though he may be slightly disconcerted to discover how often it was due to eating ergot).

In one respect, nevertheless, the book proves somewhat disappointing. Backman constantly stresses the connection between the dances and the shrines of saints who were noted for healing people, especially the mentally sick. And he also notes the frequent identification of the priest with the healer, where the dance is equally appropriate to either office. Yet he has scarcely anything to say about the therapeutic effects of dancing as it may still be applied at the present day. In view of the discoveries made by deep-psychology along these lines it would seem that the documents he has collected on the subject of dancing could be made to yield a much richer harvest. Once that harvest has been garnered it will seem less strange that a paralytic should learn to dance again before recovering her ability to walk (cf. MacMillan's *The Reluctant Healer*. Gollancz, 1952); and perhaps some of those who feel paralysed in the twentieth-century church will learn again to walk with God when once they are allowed to dance there.

DONALD NICHOLL

VISION AND ACTION: THE PROBLEM OF ECUMENISM. By Professor L. A. Zander. (Gollancz; 18s.)

The position of the Orthodox in the ecumenical movement is of the greatest interest to Catholics. Looking upon their church as they do, as the only authentic Church, and in principle refusing all compromise in this respect, might they not be a valuable example for us? Might this not be proof that positive presence in the movement does not exclude intransigence in doctrine? It is with this preoccupation of mind that Professor Zander's book is to be read, wondering at the same time whether many of the Orthodox would really go as far as he in accepting the fact of ecumenism. The interest of the subject is increased by the author's abundant knowledge, his evident open-mindedness and his Christian sympathy for every type of thought and expression. Catholicism is constantly studied, and the position he takes up with regard to the these of eminent Catholics—Fr Congar, Abbé Couturier and Monsieur Journet—enables us to settle the point with uncommon clarity and precision. A whole series of questions arising from the Orthodox conception of ecclesiology are admirably put in unequivocal terms. But there is a quick transition to ideas

which betray a concern to regularise an attitude which can only result in compromise. What he has to say of 'heretics' is typical of this (cf. pp. 95-108): it is a question of 'psychological presuppositions'. Many things are worth remembering from these condensed and fruitful passages, and for my part I gladly agree with the insistence on this fact: 'What is a heretic for us . . .? In the first instance a brother, a brother in Christ, for only a Christian can be called a heretic' (p. 101). But I think that despite Professor Zander's caveats, his theology has become unprecise when it is said with underlining: 'he, too, seeks salvation, and though we believe his path to be wrong, we have no reason to conclude that *it cannot* bring him to his destination' (p. 104). Proof that my uneasiness is well-founded is provided by the fact that he ends up with selecting different cases of 'holiness' in different confessions, and maintaining a positive will of God to produce and effect holiness in different ways which are expressed precisely by the inspiration of these different confessions. Professor Zander concludes: 'We come again and again to the conclusion that the path of salvation is a mystery and that all which is given us in the life and teaching of the Church is only a part (for us an unquestionable and unconditional part) of the divine plan' (p. 108). And that is not an isolated statement: time and again, in order to justify the fact of ecumenism, to accept its implication (e.g. in the question of proselytism), to explain the 'experiences' of ecumenical gatherings, Professor Zander manages to modify his Church as such with a quality of relativity. I will go further: he cannot escape a 'Protestant' conception. There is a threat of experience taking precedence of doctrine, private judgment will be put in front of the principles of the Church. In spite of the fervour inspiring the last chapter of the book, 'The Spiritual Reality of Ecumenism' (pp. 203-224), it must be observed that it is very much in this direction. A Catholic would not perhaps speak very differently, but his attachment to the unique truth and the clarity of what is proposed for his belief would stop him passing straightaway from subjective phenomenon to a generalising theological statement. Perhaps the fault lies deeper still, and by constantly contrasting the Catholic conception of authority with the Orthodox one which claims liberty for the individual (cf. e.g. p. 103 'papal infallibility is an expression of the infallibility of the Church (if interpreted positively) and also a denial of the believer's freedom (if interpreted negatively)'), Professor Zander goes beyond misunderstanding Catholics; is he not tending towards a Protestant conception? His reflections on the relationships of faith and liturgy are extremely interesting, but there again too hasty identifications make him pass judgments on the rites of oriental Uniates which are theologically untenable. And what has become of '*non praevallebunt*' in a judgment such as this on the dissension of heretics: 'In the perspective of history we see that those actions were mistaken and have led to the greatest disasters.

But an erroneous path may be inevitable if it is dictated by tragic necessity inherent in the nature of things. A line of conduct involving disastrous and sometimes fatal consequences may be morally binding. This is the Christian tragedy for which there is no solution within the categories of human thought and feeling' (p. 87).

I have dwelt on the dark side of this work precisely because the author's quality and knowledge make it a very attractive book. I have fears that some Catholics may let themselves be taken in by a series of formulae which have the appearance of being sympathetic and familiar, and strike a note which sounds friendly and yet uncompromising. Professor Zander has in fact conceded too much to ecumenism; from a desire to justify what willy-nilly results in compromise, he seems to us to have let go of what is essential in Orthodox intransigence. What the Catholic position on the subject is, can be adequately gathered from the numerous citations he has made from Catholic writers. Whatever Professor Zander may think of it, we shall not cease to pray and do all in our power that the position expressed in a text of Mgr Charrière (to which he gives a sense quite different from what the author intends, pp. 112—113) may by that steadfastness which is rooted in its truth, ever become more prevalent, better known and to a further extent acknowledged by all as 'catholic', that is to say 'universal'. HENRI DE RIEDMATTEN, O.P.

THE ANGLICAN DILEMMA. By the Right Hon. Sir Henry Slessor, P.C. (Hutchinson; 12s. 6d.)

The interest in this little book is indicated by these words from the introduction: 'it represents the conclusions at which I have arrived after careful and protracted study whether a convinced Catholic can in conscience remain within the Anglican communion'. From the time of the Oxford Movement this has been the crucial question for Anglicanism. It is answered by the reflection and information contained in this book, and it is the only possible answer once full light has been shed on the notion of 'catholicity'. But it is precisely to this depth that one must penetrate to judge the apparently contradictory position of so many High Church men; by 'catholic' we do not understand the same thing, and so the illogical conclusion is less flagrant than one might suppose, and the way towards the full understanding of our position less obvious. For the rest, this little book can do much to enlighten certain aspects of the problem. It is a moving testimony to an attitude and an itinerary begun by Newman, which has brought to the Church so many chosen souls. H.R.

THE BOOK OF THE SAVIOUR. Assembled by F. J. Sheed. (Sheed and Ward; 18s.)

Book-buying being as expensive as it is today, Messrs Sheed and Ward do very well to ensure that for a small sum readers may at least sample

many of the admirable works they have published. The benefit is the greater, of course, when the subject of the assembled articles is the unique one here chosen. As Christians and Catholics we all know that we should try to grow in the knowledge of Christ—whether we do try is another matter. But here at least is a new chance, an opportunity of seeing him, and matters pertaining to him, through the eyes of many—more than forty authors, in fact—who in one way or another may be able to enlighten us. The wide variety of standpoints and styles of treatment should please those especially who can seldom find a spiritual book that suits them. The two main ways by which we can seek to enlarge our knowledge of Christ—the study of his earthly life and of his life in his Mystical Body, the Church—are each well provided for. The first three of four sections into which the anthology is divided are concerned with our Lord's human life until Pentecost, while the last one continues the story 'To the end of Time'.

The book is a companion to *The Mary Book* published two years ago, and is very like it. It has however the further advantage of some theological appendices, taken from Mr Sheed's *Theology and Sanity*, which supply a useful framework. M.H.

LA PAUVRETE. Collection 'Problèmes de la Religion d'aujourd'hui'. (Cerf; Blackfriars; n.p.)

The conference convened by the Editor of *La Vie Spirituelle* to consider the very real problems of Religious Sisters in France has recently discussed the question of Chastity and the substance of their discussion will appear in book form next year. The present volume contains the papers of last year's discussion on the vow of Poverty. It would have been easy to be carried away with enthusiasm for such a Christian subject. But Père Ple, the Editor, saw the danger of such general treatment, in view of the fact that it is in the practice of poverty that the religious is most directly implicated in the economic and social changes in the world around. This is particularly true today with the advent of Marxism and the difficulties regarding capitalism. So the volume treats not only of the evangelical and monastic call to 'sell all and follow Christ', but also of canonical and economic matters concerned with the vow. Procurators may benefit in particular, as well as superiors, by these pages; and those who realise the importance of the constitution *Sponsa Christi* will find here useful applications of it to the present situation of religious sisters. The volume will appear in an English translation in 1953. C.P.

THE ASCENT TO TRUTH. By Thomas Merton. (Hollis and Carter; 18s.)

In these days, when even Catholics are in danger of being infected with indifference and materialism, any book that will help us to get back to our own spiritual past, that will introduce us again to the great doctors of

prayer, must be welcome. Thomas Merton's new book promises to do its share in this great work. *The Ascent to Truth* cannot be called an easy book to read, but the subject-matter would not be easy for any writer.

The author's purpose in writing is expressed in his own words at the beginning of chapter XVIII: 'Our only task has been to give a clear and concrete idea of the prelude to mysticism and to lay down a few fundamental principles without which infused contemplation cannot be thoroughly understood'. In a short review only a few points can be emphasised. His pages on the difference and relations between the theology of light and the theology of darkness will help many to understand the classical writers when they seem to contradict one another in their approach to the physical world, to creatures. Again, there are some who fear the teaching of St John of the Cross because of his drastic asceticism. This book should go a long way to remove such fears by showing what St John really does teach and how he leads us to love creatures in the right way. 'He will find greater joy and recreation in creatures through his detachment from them, for he cannot rejoice in them if he look upon them with attachment to them as his own.' In the same way he helps us to realise the true balance between 'knowing and unknowing', a point that can be wrongly understood with dangerous results. St John of the Cross, in his doctrine of 'unknowing', in no way condemns intellectual activity, but emphasises that there comes a time in the life of prayer when reason and knowledge can hinder us on our way to God. St John himself was a theologian. He had the deepest respect for all that reason can do to help the soul to God, but he knew its limitations. In Thomas Merton's words, 'Knowledge that is acquired by the intelligence, working in its own human mode, whether on the level of reason alone, or in the order of grace, where reason deals with the revealed truths of faith, has, for St John of the Cross, all the validity it has for St Thomas Aquinas.'

The author will have done a great work if he convinces at least some of those who hold St John of the Cross under a cloud of suspicion, that the great Carmelite is always reasonable and logical, using his teaching not only upon Theology and Holy Scripture, but also upon a profound knowledge of human nature, its strength and weakness.

BRUNO WALKER, O.C.R.

WHAT ST PAUL SAID: or The Teaching of St Paul. By J. W. C. Wand, Bishop of London. (Oxford University Press: Geoffrey Cumberlege; 7s. 6d.)

Anyone who has tried to expound St Paul in the classroom, in the lecture-room, or in church, and has used the technique of partly summarising the argument, partly reading or paraphrasing the actual words of St Paul, and partly explaining in asides the circumstances, while welding these

elements into a continuous exposition, will appreciate this book very much. Such a technique requires that the speaker have at his finger-tips on the one hand the background, be it scriptural from Acts or other Epistles or be it the general history of the times and places, and on the other hand the actual text of St Paul, together with a knowledge of the literary problems involved. Then the hearers will be able to grasp 'what St Paul said' and what his words meant to the original audiences at Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus, etc. The object of this technique is to enable hearers to appreciate the message of an Epistle as a whole, and at the same time as a section of St Paul's own developing thought. It is thus different from the task of tracing St Paul's theological doctrine from an unconnected series of scattered remarks and expositions. An important necessity is an adequate translation, preferably a translation into the idiom used by the speaker in his exposition.

Dr Wand is a master of this kind of exposition and magnificently equipped for carrying it out. This short book of 105 pages is an example of the thing in practice, being mainly a transcript of four lectures delivered to teachers in London in 1950. The four lectures are entitled: The Background, Letters of the Second Journey, Letters of the Third Journey, and Letters from Prison. The manner is extempore and spontaneous—there are no footnotes supporting opinions or weighing arguments, to confuse the issue; yet one can see that every statement has the support of scholarship and is the result of much thought. It was in 1943 that Dr Wand first published (in Australia) his masterly paraphrase into entirely modern English of the *New Testament Letters* (first published in England by the O.U.P. in 1946). In that work, as is well known, every Greek phrase of St Paul was so carefully weighed that it was matched with a phrase in contemporary English of the most striking fidelity. That work was described at the time by the present reviewer as 'scholarly, skilful, dignified, gay and orthodox', and for the purpose of these lectures Dr Wand had to hand in his own translation a most satisfactory vehicle for the kind of exposition he used.

The Catholic reader could hardly take any but the mildest exception to any of the phrases in the *New Testament Letters*, and in these lectures he would take exception to none at all; though he might have expected more emphasis on the doctrine of the Church (Ephesians) and of the Eucharist (I Corinthians). He would approve of Dr Wand's acceptance of the authenticity of the Pastorals, but would rather not see his slight hesitation about it on pages 68 and 71. He is sad not to see Hebrews mentioned at all (Dr Wand in his translation labelled it 'anonymous'), but would not press the point, since it is not specifically excluded. With regard to the stock problems in the Epistles Dr Wand takes a quite plain (and acceptable) point of view: for instance the 'principle of lawlessness' in II Thessa-

lonians is Caligula; the Galatians are the South Galatians, but the Epistle is written on the second journey; II Corinthians 10-13 are the 'severe' letter, written before II Corinthians 1-5, 7-9; Ephesians is an encyclical.

To the four lectures is added a fifth chapter on the Teaching of St Paul, in which the author sets out to 'run over the epistles once again' and is then 'in a position to pick out the main topics with which St Paul dealt, and so arrive at a fair idea of the proportion of his teaching'. During the exposition in the lectures, chapter and verse references are always provided in the margin of the summary or paraphrase.

The great value of this book is its vivid presentation of the personality and thought of St Paul, 'the endearing character of Paul as pastor and friend' (p. 68), and the very smallness of the canvas enables us to appreciate the portrait and its message almost at a single glance. Indeed, we might apply to the whole book the epithets applied by Dr Wand to St Paul's brief epistle to Philemon: 'It is earnest, loving, playful and pastoral'.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.



NOTICES

THE PRAYER OF JESUS has begun to capture the interest of Westerners, though it is doubtful whether many of them have put it into practice like its originators in Russia. Now we are given an exposition of this method of prayer by a leading nineteenth-century Orthodox bishop, Ignatius Brianchinov, translated by Father Nazarus (J. M. Watkins; 12s. 6d.). The book is redolent of the *Philokalia*, bringing a charm and simplicity to the exposition of this prayer so that the reader will derive much help on the conception and practice of true prayer even if he cannot adopt the special method. It is the first English translation of the many works of this bishop. We look forward to more; only asking that more attention be paid to editing as well as to translating.

LEX ORANDI No. 14 (Cerf and Blackfriars; 540frs.) is a true product of the *Centre Pastorale Liturgique*. It deals with *Communion Solennelle et Profession de Foi*—that is to say, with the history and significance of the three sacraments administered to children: Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion. The historical section is handled by experts such as Père Beaurecueil, O.P., and Père Bonsirven, S.J., and begins from the earliest ages. Of even greater interest is the doctrinal section by the two directors of the C.P.L., Martimort and Roguet, and by Père Daniélou, S.J. Perhaps the most instructive essay is that of Père Martimort on Confirmation. This book will help considerably in the understanding and practice of the new Easter Vigil.

TWO NEW 'L'ESPRIT LITURGIQUE', also from Cerf and following the same motive of bringing life to the liturgy, are very welcome. No. 4, *Nos Enfants et La Messe*, by Alain de Sauvebœuf (Cerf, Blackfriars; 240 frs.), suggests a method of making the Mass live for children in opposition to methods which try simply to occupy them during Mass. It begins with the problem and the results of a very French *enquête* on the subject, and then follows the age group of the children according to their psychological development. Perhaps the most controversial section is that dealing with the eight-to-tens with their egocentric instincts and therefore with their insistence on 'My Mass'. But the book is essentially practical, taking children as they are, and suggesting notebooks and illustrations with great precision. No. 5, *Les Sacraments Signes de Vie*, by A.-M. Roguet, O.P. (Cerf, Blackfriars; n.p.), is of the greatest importance. No one has hitherto dealt with the sacraments in this clear, theological manner of exposition with which the author deals with the reality of the Signs in general and with each individual sacrament. He penetrates beneath the almost mechanical words of modern catechisms. It is to be hoped that this volume will be translated as a successor to Père Roguet's previous *La Messe: approches du Mystère*, the English version of which is now in the press.

POL JOATTON has written *En Ce Temps-Ci* (Desclée de Brouwer; 420 frs.) as an attempt to transpose the principal acts of the Gospel into modern life, since Christ lives always and the Gospel is always being lived. It is in the form of a dialogue or play, the Gospel characters being made into modern people.

FATHER GERALD VANN's Lenten sermons on *The Pain of Christ*, together with his essay on *The Sorrow of God*, has proved that this is still the greatest theme of meditation. The little volume now appears in its third edition (Blackfriars Publications; 6s. 6d.) to inspire its constantly increasing number of readers with the simple sight of Christian suffering and the answer in the cross of Christ.



EXTRACTS

In the July and August-September issues of *Tijdschrift voor Geestelijk Leven* there are two articles on 'The Practice of Asceticism'. The first is a general discussion on asceticism and its problems. The second discusses at length the range of ascetical activity. The writer disclaims originality and wants 'to give, as objectively as possible, a summary of the classical writings on this subject and so offer the opportunity of making a comparison between traditional asceticism and the desires that the Holy Ghost inspires

in people of today'. In the second, and very practical, article he points out the range and path of asceticism—beginning with the mortification of the body and its senses, then the emotions, and so on through the fields of natural love, the intellect and finally to the will, the seat of evil in man.

'The purpose of the practice of asceticism is to form no respectable and well-balanced people, but *saints*; and that implies the use of means that will always be painful to our human nature. If it were not so, then the *scandalum crucis* would seem to be mere empty words.'

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The need for mortification comes back eventually to the composite nature of man, at war against himself. He is at once a physical and spiritual being, and Padre Gabriele di S. Maria Maddalena, the modern leader in matters of spiritual theology, has shown clearly how supremely different man is from the animal in this 'the fundamental human conflict' (*Rivista di Vita Spirituale*, October, 1952).

There is within us a true conflict between our deeper tendencies: between the constructive ones that have the spirit for their head and those towards immediate personal satisfaction which have their origin in our animality. Those that are egocentric easily become 'egoistic'. If this conflict is not resolved by the due subordination of the search for pleasure to the fulfilment of our human mission, man remains 'diminished' in his moral life and in his own human development. . . . The situation imposes a clear and ineluctable law, the law of renunciation; he alone who renounces his inclinations for immediate pleasure and braces himself for a work that requires strength will be able to free his constructive tendencies sufficiently and to develop them so as to reach their full possibilities.

He goes on to show how this renunciation generates a true spirit of joy which characterises any true spirit of mortification. To deny oneself with cheerfulness is difficult enough for any Lent, but that is the true Christian ideal of the Cross.

Voluntary mortifications, we know, cannot be undertaken except under some form of obedience. In the beginning of a serious attempt to live as a Christian it is often very necessary to have a direction to prevent excesses in penances. As a rule the need for such direction becomes less as the Christian becomes more immediately responsive to the Holy Spirit. In discussing the nature of the obedience of submission due to the director, Père Paul Philippe, however (*Doctrine and Life*, December to January), suggests that the need from one angle increases:

Hence she (the Christian) must have recourse to an experienced director, not so much now in order to keep alive her love of God and lean her prudence on the director's, as in order to control her behaviour under

the movement of the Holy Spirit. And this need is all the greater the more the soul advances in the mystical life; she feels it all the more necessary to have this priestly supervision the more she rises above the human mode and plunges into the great darkness of the night of love. A blind submission must sometimes be asked of her.

But even here the author does not allow it to be true obedience since the director is not a superior. 'A submission', he continues, 'that borders on obedience without becoming obedience in the proper sense; it is still prudence.' This is of the utmost importance for those who glibly say that so long as they do their voluntary penances under obedience to a director it is clearly the will of God. The situation is not quite so clear-cut. The penitent must still exercise the virtue of prudence in choosing and implementing his mortifications, a prudence which listens humbly to the *advice* of the director.

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THE SACRAMENT OF GOD'S HEALING is dealt with very freshly and constructively by Fr Harold Fuchs, O.S.B., in *Sponsa Regis* (December).

The consideration of man as a body *and* soul emphasises that Holy Unction is more a sacrament of 'fullness', of completion, than of the 'living' as it is usually termed. . . . The usual preparation for Unction, namely, the reception of Penance and Holy Communion (as Viaticum), plainly indicates that certainly the ordinary effect of the Anointing is not to be the remission of sin (Penance is the usual means to do that effectively), nor to make Christ or grace sacramentally and permanently present in the soul. (Viaticum is supposed to have done that).

From the very words of Scripture it has ordinary and extraordinary effects. Surely the ordinary effect is the healing or the helping of the soul unto glory. . . . It is absurd to hold that St James is saying the ordinary effect of the sacrament is the restoration of health to the body, for then all one would have to do to live for ever would be to receive Unction opportunely again and again! . . . The ordinary effect is the preparation of the soul for immediate entry into Heaven after death with purgatory.'

The only difficulty about all this is that it leaves the body and the oil it receives very much in the descendency. There must be more to it than that. Surely it is of importance that even after death the soul retains its transcendental relation to the material which is so honoured by the Church—honoured before death by this reverent anointing, honoured after death by reverent interment. The body is not to be despised even at or after death, at least if we follow the Church in her prayers and worship.